

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /009 W  
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R 151100Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5992

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 1697

FOR CHARGE ONLY AND FOR AF/EX DIRECTOR FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AFSP, MR

SUBJECT: NEW PLANE FOR WACASC

REF: LAGOS 8042

1. WE WILL OF COURSE READ PRO DC-8 LETTER FROM PAN AFRICAN CHIEF PILOT WITH GREATEST OF INTEREST, AND WE VERY MUCH HOPE IT WILL BE PERSUASIVE. BUT FACTS OF MAURITANIAN CIVIL AVIATION SCENE STRONGLY SUGGEST WE SHOULD NOT BET ON ASSERTED PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP DATING BACK TO AN EARLIER PERIOD AND A TOTALLY DIFFERENT CONTEXT. PAN AFRICAN CHIEF PILOT PRESUMABLY WAS FLYING USAF C-130 ENGAGED IN BRING US GRAIN TO VERY HUNGARY NATION. HE AND HIS CREW WERE MEN OF THE HOUR, AND THEIR SACKS OF FREE WHEAT UNDOUBTEDLY OPENED DOORS ALL OVER TOWN -- EVEN INTO FRENCH OFFICES. IN 1976. HOWEVER, IT IS USG (OR ITS CONTRACTOR) WHICH IS SUPPLICANT.

2. MOREOVER, NUMBER OF OTHER CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED IN RELATED AREAS WHICH ARE PERTINENT TO THIS JUDGEMENT. AS DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL: (A) UNDP/ICAO-SUPPLIED, BRITISH DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION WAS DECLARED PNG IN JANUARY AND GIVEN WEEK TO GET OUT OF COUNTRY. AMONG OTHER COMPLAINTS WAS CHARGE THAT HE WAS "CIA AGENT"; (B) NEW DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION IS APPARENTLY UNQUALIFIED MAURITANIAN BUREAUCRAT WHOSE PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN IN DIRECTLY RELEVANT FIELD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION; (C) OF TWO  
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REMAINING ICAO EXPERTS IN CIVIL AVIATION DIRECTORATE,  
ONE IS TUNISIAN WHO HAS REPUTATION OF BEING AVAILABLE

TO HIGHEST BIDDER. OTHER IS BULGARIAN WHO MAKES NO EFFORT TO CONCEAL HIS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH SOVIET EMBASSY STAFF; (D) FRENCH PRESENCE IN AVIATION, ROLE IN NATIONAL AIRLINE AND SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS, AND CLOUT IN AVIATION CIRCLES, IS CLEARLY ON INCREASE. INVERSELY, US PRESENCE, POLZONAND INFLUENCE ARE DIMINISHING. ACQUISITION PRESIDENTIAL CARAVELLE AND DISPLACEMENT HUGHES AIRWEST MAINTENANCE TEAM ARE POINTS ON DOWNWARD CURVE.

3. EFFECTIVENESS OF PERSONAL INTERVENTION IN PURSUIT OF EXCEPTION TO TECHNICAL CIVIL AVIATION REGULATION OR PRACTICE IS AT LEAST QUESTIONABLE. DEPARTMENT WILL ALSO RECALL EMIR OF QATAR CANCELLED PLANNED FORMAL VISIT TO NOUAKCHOTT BECAUSE GIRM WOULD NOT PERMIT HIM TO LAND HIS VC-10 HERE. AT LEAST THAT IS WHAT QATARIS TOLD EMBASSY DOHA. FORMER UN CIVIL AVIATION DIRECTOR INSISTED EMIR'S BRITISH PILOTS MADE DECISION AFTER HE RAISED QUESTION OF LENGTH AND BEARING CAPACITY OF NOUAKCHOTT RUNWAY. WHEREVER TRUTH LIES, GIVEN GIRM'S INTENSE FINANCIAL INTEREST IN GOOD RELATIONS WITH QATAR, WE WOULD PRESUME GIRM DID NOT REBULL GOLDEN EMIR FOR FRIVOLOUS REASONS. IF PAN AFRICAN AIRLINES IS CONSIDERING USING SOMETHING OTHER THAN CHIEF PILOT'S SMILE OR OLD TIMES WITH CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITIES, WE WOULD ONLY RECALL THAT MANUFACTURER OF CHIEF PILOTS HERCULES HAS RECENTLY ACQUIRED CERTAIN NOTORIETY FOR HAVING FLOWN THAT COURSE.

4. ALL OF WHICH BRING US BACK TO OUR INITIAL CONCERN. WE VERY MUCH HOPE USG WILL NOT DECIDE TO REPLACE TIRED OLD DC-6 WITH SLEEK NEW JET AIRCRAFT WHICH CANNOT SERVICE US MISSION TO MAURITANIA.

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